

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Regular Meeting of February 18, 2014
Meeting Room – 8:00 AM**

The regular meeting of the DDA Board was called to order at 8:03 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: *Greg Presley, Jim Long, Shawn Riley, Margene Buckhave, Mary Starring, Chris Johnson, John Casey, Lynda Heaton*

Absent: *Carolann Ayers, Excused*

Also Present: *City Manager/Patrick Sullivan, DDA Director/Lori Ward, DDA Planning Coordinator/Kate Knight, DDA Marketing & Communications Coordinator/Christa Williams, Northville School Board President/Ken Roth, Building Owner/Chuck Lapham, Building Owner/Lee Holland, City of Northville Finance Director/Sandi Wiktorowski*

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

None

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

Consent agenda as follows:

- Minutes of DDA Meeting January 2014
- Financial Statement of January 2014
- Invoice Report January 2014
- PR Summary January 2014

Motion by Johnson, seconded by Casey, to approve the Agenda and Consent Agenda with an amendment to the Minutes. **Motion carried unanimously.**

PRESENTATION BY LEE HOLLAND OUTDOOR PUBLIC ART

Lee Holland presented a request for a mural in the Downtown. He has requested that it be located on the Riffles building (east side of Town Square). He is interested in having Eric Henn, an artist, paint the mural. Lee presented examples of the artist's works. Per Lee, the artist would create a preliminary drawing, to be presented for content approval. Lee suggested as the topic of the mural, using one of Northville's historical sites, festivals, or businesses.

Lee is looking to have the easement agreement changed such that it would provide Lee the ability to have a mural painted on the Riffle's wall, rather than the use currently stated within the existing perpetual easement agreement between the City of Northville and the building's owners. As for the cost, Lee stated that private funding would cover the expense of the mural painting, not maintenance costs. According to Lee, if the building is sold, the easement agreement would be worded such that the mural must remain in-tact, and cannot be removed.

Conversation occurred regarding alternative walls on which to paint a mural. A subcommittee was created to explore an alternate location for the mural and the mural's topic. Mayor Johnson suggested the following as members of this committee: two members from Historic District Commission, two members of the DDA Board, two members from the Arts Commission. Lynda Heaton and Margene Buckhave volunteered for the committee, as representatives from the DDA Board.

PRESENTATION BY CHUCK LAPHAM LIGHTED SIGN FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The First Presbyterian Church applied to the Historic District Commission (HDC) to install a LED sign cabinet to the lower portion of their existing sign at 200 East Main Street. The project was denied by the HDC because it did not meet the standards of the City's Sign Ordinance that prohibits internally illuminated signs in the Historic District. Chuck Lapham stated that the LED sign is needed to attract new members and to let the community know of the many programs and services that the church provides. Lapham appealed to the DDA Board to write a letter of support for the project to the Historic District Commission.

Discussion took place over the church's request and the process that would be required for the project to be approved locally. Currently state law stipulates that appeals to the local HDC be made to the State Historic Preservation Review Board. In order to approve the sign locally, a change to the City's Sign Ordinance would be required. This change would have the effect of allowing internally illuminated signs anywhere in the Central Business District (CBD). Other sign alternatives were discussed.

Motion by Long, seconded by Heaton, to write a letter asking City Council to consider an ordinance change which would have the effect of allowing the First Presbyterian Church to have, under HDC controls, an internally illuminated sign, as described to the DDA Board. **Motion carried as follows: Johnson abstained, Riley absent, Buckhave opposed, four approved.**

DDA OPERATING BUDGET 2014-2015

Lori Ward presented the DDA Operating Budget for 2014-2015. Budget challenges still exist for this fiscal year. At this time, the Finance Department is still working on revenue dollars. This means some of the budget items will be negatively adjusted. Some of the causes of this include: personal property tax elimination for this year which accounts for

approximately \$34,180; a 1% decline within the taxable geographic area of the DDA, which will account for a decrease of approximately \$8,000; finally, a decline in investments of approximately \$1,000. The DDA is asking for direction as to how to address the budget given that the DDA will have to use the Fund Balance for operational needs. The final loan payment to the City of Northville will be made in the 2017-2018 Budget Year. This will reduce deficit amounts by approximately \$35,000. However, over the next three years, there is a reliance on the Fund Balance to pay for operational expenses. The proposed draft includes highlights of the following: static operating expenditures; salaries and fringes for staff and seasonal contractors; capital improvement projects planned for the 2014-2015 fiscal year; and discussion entries which may be reduced or removed from the budget to help with the maintenance of the Fund Balance, moving forward. Ward proposed removal of the Business Assistance Program (BAP) for the 2014-2015 budget, yet maintain the existing earmarked dollars for this program, in the 2013-2014 budget.

Ward also pointed out two amounts which have been budgeted, but are open for discussion: repairs to the pavilion glass, and rusting structural issues, in Town Square; and repairs to the Main/Center Street parking deck. No monies have been allocated for lighting or alley repairs this year or in future years.

Ward asked the following questions: what is the DDA Board's desired Fund Balance amount; what is our focus for the limited available resources (is it capital projects, or is it marketing/events); to what level should the DDA support other organizations' initiatives; and finally, what type of cuts should be made in this budget, or next year's, to decrease the reliance on the Fund Balance?

Motion by Long, seconded by Casey, to remove the BAP Cycle 9 from the 2013-2014 budget. Motion carried as follows: Riley absent, Heaton opposed, five approved.

The Organizational Committee will re-examine the budget and submit for approval at the March 2014 DDA Board meeting. Greg Presley proposed that a more detailed discussion occur regarding the different line items in question within the proposed budget, along with how the Fund Balance is interpreted: should it be a percentage of income; or should it be a fixed dollar amount.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

Design Committee

None

Marketing/Business Mix Committee

None

Parking Committee

None

Organizational Committee

None

COMMUNICATION

Board and Staff Communications

None

Meeting adjourned at 10:16 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christa Williams
Northville DDA
Marketing & Communication Coordinator